



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 324**

*January Session, 2009*

Substitute House Bill No. 5172

*House of Representatives, March 30, 2009*

The Committee on Insurance and Real Estate reported through REP. FONTANA, S. of the 87th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CONNECTICUT CLEARINGHOUSE TO PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION TO INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL EMPLOYERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1       Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2009*) (a) There is established a  
2       program which shall be known as the "Connecticut Clearinghouse", to  
3       be administered by the Health Reinsurance Association established in  
4       section 38a-556 of the general statutes, through which individuals and  
5       small employers may obtain information about available health  
6       insurance policies and health care plans.

7       (b) Said association shall, in consultation with the Insurance  
8       Commissioner, develop a web site, telephone number or other method  
9       to serve as a clearinghouse for information about individual and small  
10      employer health insurance policies and health care plans that are  
11      available to consumers in this state, including, but not limited to, the  
12      Medicaid program, the HUSKY Plan, state-administered general

13 assistance, the Charter Oak Health Plan set forth in section 17b-311 of  
 14 the general statutes, the Municipal Employee Health Insurance Plan  
 15 set forth in subsection (i) of section 5-259 of the general statutes, and  
 16 any individual or small employer health insurance policies or health  
 17 care plans an insurer, health care center or other entity chooses to list  
 18 with the Connecticut Clearinghouse.

19 (c) Such method developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section  
 20 shall use interactive tools or technology to provide a consumer with a  
 21 list of health insurance policies or health care plans that, based on the  
 22 responses provided by such consumer, may be appropriate for such  
 23 consumer's circumstances.

24 (d) The Insurance Commissioner shall establish procedures for the  
 25 Health Reinsurance Association to confirm with the Insurance  
 26 Department that a policy or plan listed with the Connecticut  
 27 Clearinghouse is approved to be sold in this state and that the insurer,  
 28 health care center or other entity that offers such policy or plan is  
 29 authorized to do business in this state. Such procedures shall include,  
 30 but not be limited to, a timetable for such list to be updated on a  
 31 regular basis, but not less than every ninety days.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2009	New section

**INS**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

This bill creates a Connecticut Clearinghouse to be administered by the Health Reinsurance Association, a nonprofit legal entity, and does not result in a fiscal impact.

**The Out Years**

None

**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 5172*****AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CONNECTICUT CLEARINGHOUSE TO PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION TO INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL EMPLOYERS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes the Connecticut Clearinghouse, from which people and small employers (those with 50 and fewer employees) may get information about health insurance policies and health care plans available in Connecticut. These include Medicaid, HUSKY, state-administered general assistance (SAGA), Charter Oak, the Municipal Employee Health Insurance Plan (MEHIP), and any individual or small employer health insurance policies or health care plans an insurer, HMO, or other entity chooses to list with the clearinghouse.

It requires the Health Reinsurance Association (HRA) to (1) administer the clearinghouse and (2) in consultation with the insurance commissioner, develop an interactive web site, telephone number, or other method for giving information on available plans that, based on a consumer's responses, may be appropriate for his or her circumstances.

The bill requires the commissioner to establish procedures for HRA to confirm with the Insurance Department that (1) a policy or plan listed with the clearinghouse is approved for sale in Connecticut and (2) the entity offering it is authorized to do business here. The procedures must require updating the list at least every 90 days.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2009

**BACKGROUND*****Health Reinsurance Association***

The legislature created HRA to provide comprehensive health insurance to people who cannot obtain insurance from commercial insurers (i.e., to serve as the high risk pool). By law, all Connecticut health insurers and HMOs are (1) HRA members and (2) assessed for its losses. HRA's board of directors is composed of nine individuals selected by the participating member companies.

HRA also serves as the state's acceptable alternative mechanism for complying with the guaranteed issue option in the individual market required under federal law (HIPAA). The law requires HRA to offer special health care plans to low-income individuals and certain small employers.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Insurance and Real Estate Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 18      Nay 0      (03/12/2009)